

BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

Fostoria Post Office
Fostoria, Iowa

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Docket No. A2012-91

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS

(February 6, 2012)

The Postal Regulatory Commission (Commission) received correspondence from five postal customers (Participants) opposing the closure of the Fostoria, Iowa post office (Fostoria post office).¹ Following the closure of Fostoria post office the Spencer post office, located seven miles away, will assume the administrative responsibility of providing delivery and retail services by rural route service to cluster box units (CBUs).² The decision to close the Fostoria post office should be affirmed by the Commission.

Participant Concerns. The Participants raise concerns about the effect on the community from closing the Fostoria post office. Petitioner Voss argues that since residents will be forced to handle their postal affairs outside of Fostoria, IA they will also

¹ Petition for Review Received from Linda Birchard Regarding the Fostoria, IA Post Office 51340, 11/30/2011 (L. Birchard Petition); Petition for Review Received from Marlin Voss Regarding the Fostoria, IA Post Office 51340, 12/9/2011 (M. Voss Petition); Petition for Review Received from Gale E. Jacobson Regarding the Fostoria, IA Post Office 51340, 12/9/2011 (G. Jacobson Petition); Petition for Review Received from Kathleen Shatto Regarding the Fostoria, IA Post Office 51340, 12/9/2011 (K. Shatto Petition); Petition for Review Received from Jody Shatto Regarding the Fostoria, IA Post Office 51340, 12/9/2011 (J. Shatto Petition).

² Final Determination to Close the Fostoria, IA Post Office and Establish Service by Rural Route Service (Final Determination) at 2.

³ G. Jacobson Petition; K. Shatto Petition; J. Shatto Petition

⁴ United States Postal Service's Comments Regarding Appeal, January 24, 2012

take their business affairs elsewhere. The Participants additionally, express doubt about the CBUs security and durability in the winter weather conditions faced in Iowa.³

The Postal Service addressed these Participants concerns' in its comments.⁴ They reply that inclement weather conditions are also endured by those with curbside mailboxes and P.O. Boxes. The Postal Service also explains that snow removal is provided under obligation to maintain CBUs. In concurrence, they also note that many transactions do not require commuting to the nearest post office or being present at the CBU when the carrier is. The Postal Service, in addressing Petitioner Voss's concerns about local businesses, explains that the regular and effective service of the post office is more critical to businesses than its location. Furthermore, it's noted that given minimal expected population growth, carrier service is adequate for existing businesses and community residents.

Other Issues. The Public Representative notes one issue concerning the 98 post office boxes at the Fostoria post office. While the Spencer post office has 560 available, the Milford post office has 9. However, because the Postal Service is also providing CBUs, Fostoria customers will continue to receive regular and effective service. The Postal Service should ensure that residents closer to the Milford post office get first priority for available P.O. Boxes.

Conclusion. After careful review of the Postal Service's Final Determination, the materials in the Administrative Record, the arguments presented by Participants, and the Postal Service Comments, the Public Representative concludes that the Postal Service has followed applicable procedures and requirements of 39 U.S.C. § 404(d), that the decision to close the Fostoria post office is neither arbitrary nor capricious, and

that the Postal Service's decision is supported by substantial evidence. The Public Representative thus affirms the determination to close the Fostoria post office.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Brent W. Peckham
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Docket No. A2012-91

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